CHAPTER I

Life of Daivarata

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IX. Brief survey of the wanderings of Daivarata with his preceptors

I. Introduction.

Sanskrit works of Daivarata Sharma have been taken up for their evaluation. The works of an author can not be properly evaluated unless his life is studied rightly. Hence, a sincere effort is made in depicting the life-sketch of Daivarata Sharma before we enter into the evaluation of his works.

For the life history of Daivarata Sharma, one has to depend mainly upon his unpublished biography written by his grand-son Shri. Vedasrava Sharma. Vedasrava, who lost his mother in his early childhood, followed his grand-father since his childhood-days. He knew Daivarata from close vicinity.

Daivarata was recalling and was narrating major events of his life when he got injured in a car-accident some time in 1971-72. Vedasrava took down the notes then and wrote a biography of Daivarata on the basis of those notes. When this research scholar requested Vedasrava, he handed over all the original notes and the biography he wrote which has remained unpublished.

II. Gokarn, the birth-place of Daivarata Sharma

Gokarn was the birth-place of Daivarata Sharma. It is a well known pilgrimage-centre on the west-coast of Southern India. Lord Mahabaleshvara is the presiding deity of Gokarn. Besides, there are numerous temples in Gokarn which make Gokarn a temple-town. Moreover, since many centuries, Gokarn is a well known

centre of the study of *Vedic* literature. Various communities of brahmins have been dwelling here and they are mainly engaged in priestly activities.

III. Ancestors of Daivarata Sharma

Ancient records of the family-history of Daivarata are not available. It can be traced back only upto his grand- father.

The priestly families of Gokarn were engaged in running the institution of the *vedic* rites and sacrifices and in making *vedic* study a long lasting one. And in course of time some of those families were also engaged in agriculture.

These brahmin-families belong to different *Gotras* like *Kaśyapa, Vasiṣṭha* and so on. These *Gotras* are in one sense the traditional family names. In Gokarn, inspite of those *Gotras*, each one of the brahmin-families has been bearing an independent family-name of its own like *Mārkāṇḍeya, Hiregaṅge*. *Bhaḍati* was the family-name of Daivarata.

Bhaḍati-family was, like many other families, engaged in the study as well as the practice of *vedic* literature and rituals. And even before the birth of Daivarata, the family was holding cultivable land, it is told.[1]

Traditionally family belongs to *Viśvāmitra Gotra.*

Here, an effort is made to make a brief survey of the family of Daivarata right from his grand-father Varadeshvara Bhadati.

Thus, Varadeshvara Bhadati had three sons. They were Shiva, Vighneshvara and Subraya Bhadati. Among these three, Vighneshvara Bhadati was the father of Daivarata.

Vighneshvara Bhadati, middle of the three sons of Varadeshvara had three wives.[2] They were Nagaveni, Saraswati and Parvati. Second wife namely Saraswati

didn't bear any children. First wife Nagaveni had three children. They were two sons and named Ganesha[3] and Sitarama and one daughter named Lalita. Vighneshvara Bhadati had two sons in his third wife named Parvati ; they were Umamaheshvara and Dattattreya. In this line Umamaheshvara has no children and Dattatreya has a son named Vighneshvara.

IV. Parents of Daivarata

We have noted previously that Vighneshvara Bhadati, the second son of Varadeshvara Bhadati was the father of Daivarata Sharma. The mother of Daivarata was Nagaveni who was the eldest wife among the three wives.

Vighneshvara Bhadati was a tender-hearted *Vedic* scholar. He was modest and polite though he was a scholar. Not only he was a *Vedic* scholar, he was a writer and a composer too. He wrote hymns on deities in Classical Sanskrit and composed devotional songs in Kannad. It shows his mastery and command over the two languages. Moreover, he had a sweet voice and he could sing those self-composed devotional songs melodiously and he used to sing them to show how they should be sung.

Vighneshvara Bhadati was an agriculturist also and Bhadati family had a piece of cultivable land which was six to seven kilometres away from Gokarn. Vighneshvara Bhadati had to cover this distance by walk in the morning and had to work in the fields till his return in the evening. In the middle, he had to cook the gruel of rice in the small cottage in the noon for mid-day meal. We will see that Daivarata was, in his boyhood, accompanying his father in the farm-work and received his initial lessons of vedic hymns from his father.

Vighneshvara Bhadati was also an ardent practitioner of daily rites and all kinds of traditional rituals prescribed in the scriptures.

Thus, Vighneshvara Bhadati was a *vedic* scholar on the one hand and he was a creative writer on the other, as he has composed, it is told, some hymns in Sanskrit and has composed devotional songs in Kannad. Simultaneously he was a hard worker. Thus the personality was a healthy combination of both, mental and mannual faculties. Such was the father of Daivarata Sharma from whom Daivarata had his initial education in *vedas*.

Mother of Daivarata was Nagaveni. She was tall and beautiful. [4] Her face was always shining with a smile. She was a faithful housewife. Joint families were common in Gokarn and around in those days. Those joint families were of a complex nature. The womenfolk had to share household duties. Under such circumstances those women had to dedicate themselves for the betterment of the whole family, sometime even at the cost of their self-identity. Tolerance, absence of selfishness and dedication were essential to do this tedious work. Nagaveni was not an exception to this general rule and she had to look after household duties all along the day. Her face was always bearing a shining smile even after discharging day-long tedious household duties. In the meantime, she had to bring up children properly. In the midst of all these things Nagaveni was also a woman with spiritual temperament. Nagaveni was finding time even in the middle of her continuous work in the kitchen and elsewhere, for paying regular visits to the temples and express her spirituality and devotion. In her regular visits to the temples Daivarata became a regular companion since he attained the age of four. This was the earliest spiritual impression laid down by his mother on Daivarata and he recalls this in his narratives[5].

Nagaveni had begotten three children-two sons and one daughter. Ganesha, who later became Daivarata, was the eldest among her children. Sitarama was the second child and Lalita, the daughter was the last.

Daivarata lost his mother at an early age. At the age of seven years he became a *Dvija* by *Upanayana*. His mother fell sick after some time of his *upanayana* ceremony. Sitarama was about four years old and Lalita was still an infant at that time.

Proper medical assistance was not available in Gokam in those days. Nagaveni was suffering from fever. Fever was coming occasionally in the initial stages. But as days passed on, it was troubling very frequently. Ultimately she became bed-ridden.

The miserable condition of her children was more pathetic than her illness as she was not able to look after them in that condition. Even Daivarata, eldest among her children, had not reached that age in which one could stand on his own legs. Under the circumstances, more and more responsibilities came upon the soft shoulders of Daivarata. He had to look after his younger brother and sister. In the meantime Nagaveni had been shifted to her parents' home along with her children.

Nagaveni's brother Ganapati Shastri was an employee in the postal department. Therefore he was moving from one place to another as it was a transferable job. Consequently her aged mother alone had somehow to manage the house. Nagaveni, together with her children, was shifted when this was the situation in her parents' home.

Daivarata had to shoulder the responsibilities of his younger brother and sister on the one hand and he had to attend tohis mother on the other. Ultimately Nagaveni's illness became fatal. One day Nagaveni, as if she foresaw the things, advised Daivarata. Daivarata recalls that pathetic condition in his narration: "The

fever was strange. The temperature was uncertain at every moment. If it was low on the previous day it was reaching very high degree the very next day. Lalita was a small baby at that time. As the mother was lying on the sick-bed the child had no privilege of enjoying the mother's care and affection. Hence the baby was continuously weeping......mother was worrying especially for Lalita. Another son Sitarama was a boy of five years then ..... in this state she was shifted to her parents' home. As days passed on, my mother even could not walk ..... I was, being the eldest son to my parents, considered myself fortunate. Because I could extend my services since she fell sick.... Fever was severe from three days. She was completely weak. That was the fourth day of the bright-half in the *Phālguna*. I was sitting near my mother on the sick-bed. She was starting uttering these words in a low tone - `....dear son, you nourished me like a mother does to her children. Preserve this quality and extend your service to the elders and disabled ; may God bless you.....' I poured some drops of holy water in her mouth and after a moment of silence she breathed her last. And I performed the funeral ceremonies alone as my younger brother Sitarama had not undergone his *upanayana* ....."[6]

V. The Family of Daivarata

Daivarata married twice. He had avoided marriage once when his father had arranged his marriage when he was only thirteen years old. He ran away in pursuit of spirituality, followed a *guru* who had just visited Gokarn in those days. After his return he had to marry the same girl Arundhati. Arundhati was the daughter of Daivarata's maternal uncle, Ganapati Shastri. Nagaveni, the mother of Daivarata, had requested her brother in this connection when she was on the sick-bed. Ganapati Shastri did keep his vow and accepted to give his daughter to Daivarata in the

marriage. Even the grand-mother was very interested in this marriage. Hence the marriage took place after Daivarata's return.

But Arundhati didn't bear children. Daivarata married another girl called Shraddhadevi later. Daivarata had three sons and four daughters in Shraddhadevi. The details of the families of those sons and daughters are as follows : [7]

Somasrava is the eldest among Daivarata's sons. He had married twice. The elder wife was Lakshmi in whom Vedasrava was born. Second wife was Savitri and in her Somasrava had one son and two daughters.

Second son Satyasrava did not marry.

Third son of Daivarata married Savitri, and had two daughters.

Eldest among the daughters of Daivarata is Mahadevi. She was given to Mahabaleshvara in marriage and she had six children, three sons and three daughters.

Next comes the name of Shachidevi who married Ganapati and had three sons.

Prajnadevi is another daughter given in marriage to Venkataramana: she had two sons and two daughters.

The youngest daughter is Bharati and her husband is Lakshminarayana. She had two children.

All these sons, daughters and grand-children of Daivarata are dwelling in Gokarn and outside. They are leading good family-lives. The grand-children are educated and this author met some of them in Gokarn.

One detailed family-tree is attached with this chapter which is prepared by this researcher with the help of Vedasrava, the grand-son of Daivarata.

VI. Daivarata's Childhood

Vighneshvara Bhadati and Nagaveni were leading an ideal Hindu orthodox conjugal life in Gokarn in the last century as previously mentioned. Husband was engaged in the *ṣaṭkarma* i.e. *yajana, yājana, adhyayana, adhyāpana, dāna and pratigraha* and sometimes in agriculture whereas the wife was busy in her household duties. A son was born to such a couple on Monday, the fifth day of bright half of *Puṣya* in *Khara Saṁvat* of the *Śālivāhana śaka* year 1813, corresponding date according to the English calendar was fourth January 1891[8]. Ganesha was the name given to that boy in due course. The boy was the first progeny to his parents. Hence, naturally the child had the privilege of enjoying full affection and love of his parents.

The child was normal in the initial stages. But, when he attained three years of age some abnormal tendency in the behaviour of the boy was found. Usually children belonging to this age-group are of the nature that they easily mix-up with other children and sometimes they play and sometimes they quarrel. But Ganesha (Daivarata) in his childhood did not exhibit any kind of natural tendencies. He was not mixing with other children of his age. He was neither playing nor quarrelling with them. The boy was not even said to be obstinate. Some special elements of the boy's behaviour were such that the parents were not able to understand whether the boy was normal or abnormal.

As previously mentioned Ganesha's mother Nagaveni used to take him wherever she went, especially to the temples. This practice of visiting temples along with his mother had its own impact on the boy. She taught him to bow down to the deities in the temples and to the elderly persons. The child was obeying such orders of his mother even though sometimes his behaviour was peculiar.

Time gradually passed on; the boy then attained the age of five years. He still had some abnormality in his behaviour. During those days, an ascetic was staying in Gokarn who had come from Gwaliar. Previously he was Jayaram Bhat Sapre - afterwards he became a *saṁnyāsin* and became Saccidananda Saraswati. Ganesha the boy, was a regular visitor to Saccidananda Saraswati along with his mother. The boy used to bow down to His Holiness even before the instruction of his mother to do so. His Holiness used to bless him.

That sort of faith, earnestness and devotion towards saintly beings and towards God were found in the boyhood itself.

The same boy who had accompanied his mother in her visits to the temples and saints had to shoulder the responsibilities of looking after her when she fell sick and later he had to nourish his younger brother and sister.

The latter part of Ganesha's childhood was not a childhood in every respect. Some events like his mother's death in his life made him helpless. Even after his mother's death he had to look after his younger brother and sister. On the other hand he had also to look after his grand-mother as his maternal uncle's was a transferable job in the post-office. In the absence of his maternal uncle Ganapati Shastri, it was Ganesha who accompanied the aged mother of Ganapati Shastri. In that case also we can see the utter service-motive of Ganesha in the boy-hood itself and the impact and impression of the services extended towards elderly persons can be found throughout the life of the boy. He was not an average child, he was not an average boy ; might be some hidden force within him ;might be some events like his mother's death; by one reason or the other or by both, any way the childhood of Ganesha was not filled with bliss and comforts.However one thing can be said with certainty that the seeds in the form of hardcore of life sown in the childhood were

not fruitless and futile. We will see how Ganesha struggled with the hardships throughout his life in pursuit of knowledge and spirituality and became most revered sage Daivarata.

VII. Education of Ganesha

The concept of education can be traced back to the civilisation of the mankind, though the mode has changed from time to time.Still we think in terms of modern system of education whenever we refer to the education of a person.If we take merely the yardstick of modern educational system to measure Ganesha's educational qualifications,we are bound to commit a serious blunder as he did not have any formal education as such. He neither attended a school nor appeared for any examination. But he knew more than half a dozen languages, almost every *mantra* of all the *vedas* and he had mastered other lores also. It does not mean that he did not learn anything from teachers. That is, we could not expect schools and educational institutions of the modern type in those days at Gokarn. There were *Pāṭhashālās* conducted by individuals. Here an attempt is made to trace Ganesha's early days of formal learning.

At the age of seven, *upanayana saṁskāra* was given to Ganesha. Before this ceremony he might have learnt some devotional songs. After *upanayana* the *Rigveda pāṭha* was initiated to him by his father, Vighneshvara Bhadati. But Vighneshvara Bhadati was not able to teach regularly as he had his own routine works to attend. If he was teaching in the early morning-hours one day, he would teach in the afternoon next day. Whenever he was getting some leisure in the middle of his work he was teaching his son. There was no regular time-table. Vighneshvara Bhadati was engaged in agriculture also. He had to walk about eight kilometres in the morning

and had to stay whole day in the fields. He used to comeback in the evening. If the work was more in the fields he had to stay for four or five days in the fields. He was taking sometimes his son to the fields, along with him. The father was teaching *Rigveda* to the son while they were walking towards the fields or were returning from the fields. In that way Daivarata received his first *Rigveda*-lessons from his father.

Anyway, Vighneshvara Bhadati was not contented the way he was teaching. There were many interruptions as he was busy in the agricultural and other occupations. Hence he wanted to make an alternate arrangement so that the learning could continue regularly.

At that time Krishna Bhat was running a *Pathashala* in Gokarn. During those days in Gokarn, those who had interest in teaching, were running *Pathashala*s at their residences. Vighneshvara Bhadati enrolled Ganesha's name in the *Pathashala* of Krishna Bhat. Krishna Bhat was a most disciplined teacher. He was expecting the same kind of discipline from his disciples also. His rules were very strict. The students had a hard time then. *Pathashala* began at the dawn and went up to ten O'clock in the morning. Again immediately after the lunch the studies continued till evening. There was no breakfast in the morning. The account given in the biography of Daivarata gives a clear picture of *Pathashala*. " There was no separate building facility for the *Pathashala*s those days. The teachers were imparting knowledge of various *śāstras* and were teaching *vedic* and other scriptural texts to the students at their own residences. The rules and regulations were very hard ...... There was no provision for breakfast in those days. Students had to get up early in the morning ; sometimes the students had the provision to drink a cup of milk and they had to complete morning work and straightway go to the *Pathashala*. There

they stayed upto ten O'clock before noon. Then there was a short interval for the lunch. They have the lunch i.e. the gruel made up of rice and after this short- while students were used to return for the study which continued till evening. ...."[9]

Ganesha learnt *Rigveda*-portions in the *Pathashala* of Krishna Bhat for about five to six years. At the age of thirteen his marriage was fixed and he escaped from that marriage and ran away from Gokarn in search of true spiritual knowledge. After his return to Gokarn, he studied Classical Sanskrit from his maternal uncle, who taught him *Raghuvamsha* of Kalidasa.

The formal education which he had was very little but in course of time he had enlightened himself with mastery over Hindu scriptures and not less than half a dozen Indian languages. He reached that height where the *mantras* revealed to him. That was the glory of the personality and he thus contributed many valuable works in Sanskrit.

Lastly, after the lapse of many years from the studentship under Krishna Bhat, Ganesha (Daivarata) approached Baba Saheb Jamakhandikar for the study of Vedic grammar at Benares. Vasudevanand Saraswati instructed him to do so and Shri Pradyumnananda, formerly known as Balavant Rao Bhagavat, took Daivarata Sharma to Benares and introduced him to Jamakhandikar. [10]

VIII. Preceptors of Daivarata

A brief account of Daivarata's formal education has been given in the previous section. But an elaborate survey of the preceptors and great persons who influenced Daivarata in his efforts to attain highest reality is necessary. Because Daivarata wandered behind many *gurus* seeking the path to attain spiritual heights and many great persons influenced him and guided him in this regard. Daivarata believed his

preceptors as visible gods.[11] The life history of Daivarata would be incomplete without an account of his preceptors. Ganesha would have remained Ganesha and would not have become Daivarata without those *gurus.* Hence this account is felt necessary and in the following pages, an effort is made to bring out their brief life-sketches and the ways in which they influenced Ganesha to become Daivarata.

i) Father and Mother

In a pretty long list of Ganesha's preceptors his parents occupy naturally the first place. The early spiritual impression he had, was from his mother though she died in his childhood. Her influence could not be denied as she took him to temples and other holy places along with her in the earlier phase of his childhood. On the other hand, his father, who was a *vedic* scholar and a poet, taught him actually some *Rigvedic* portions initially. Even without these teachings, the father would occupy the place of a preceptor according to our scriptures. What can be said, here, in the case of Vighneshvara Bhadati who initiated the study of *Rigveda* to Ganesha and also who gave the *saṁskāra* of *upanayana* to Ganesha ? Ganesha was fortunate that he had such parents. In latter part of life he showed keen interest in agriculture which was also inherited through his father.

ii) Krishna Bhat

As has already been mentioned in the previous section,Krishna Bhat taught Ganesha for five to six years. In the *Pathashala* of Krishna Bhat he learnt *Rigveda.* The discipline and determination of Krishna Bhat had left deep impression upon the student Ganesha.

iii) Ramadasa Swamy

The history of Maharashtra state of eighteenth century is of very importance from the view-point of spiritual movement which is living even today. The movement was pioneered by the great **Samartha Ramadasa.** One saint called Ramadasa Swamy, who belonged to that *Samartha* cult of *bhaktiyoga*, was visiting Gokarn while Ganesha was studying *Rigveda* in Krishna Bhat's *Pathashala.*

Santa Ramadasa, it is said in the biography of Daivarata, hailed from the then Indore State. He was born in a rich family in the village of Badowda of Rampur district of that state. His father was Krishna Rao Kher. The movable and immovable property belonging to that family came down from generations and was abundant. The village Badowda was very close to river Chambal. Santa Ramadasa enjoyed worldly life for some years and he had the privilege of enjoying the status of "Sir Suba" - magisterial power over five districts. Hence he was staying at Ujjain. He was born rich; he had high status in the society; he was well placed in life. In every respect his worldly life was full. Inspite of all the comforts he was attracted to the life of renunciation. He joined the Samartha tradition of *Bhaktiyoga* and became Santa Ramadasa. He was a married person and had a daughter before he joined that tradition. [12]

Daivarata wandered along with Santa Ramadasa and visited almost all holy places of the country and became well versed in *Bhaktiyoga.* Santa Ramadasa was expressing his sheer devotion through singing *bhajanas* along with dancing for hours together. Daivarata was accustomed with all these things in the company of Ramadasa. In addition to singing and dancing and surrendering at the feet of the deities, Daivarata learnt one more thing, and that was cooking all kinds of North-Indian dishes.

iv) Balavant Rao Bhagavat

Balavant Rao Bhagavat was another name in the preceptors' list of Daivarata. Balavant Rao also hailed from the Indore State as he was the son of the maternal uncle of Santa Ramadasa. Daivarata wandered to almost all holy places of North India along with Ramadasa and after his demise Daivarata came back to Gokarn and stayed in a temple called Chikkavaradeshvara temple. Balavant Rao was managing 'Ahalyabayi Chatra" at Gokarn at that time. He was leading a simple life and looked like a saint. He was a regular performer of daily rites and was meditating everyday for hours together.[13] Inspite of all his business he was performing *haṭhayoga* regularly and he was teaching *haṭhayoga* to the interested people in the morning and evening. Daivarata met him and joined his *haṭhayoga*-classes. In the course of those classes Daivarata learnt various *yogic* practices like *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *dhauti* and neti. This practice of *haṭhayoga* brought up on the one hand, perfect health to Daivarata till his last breath and it helped him in his efforts to reach spiritual heights on the other. The same Balavant Rao became 'Pradyumnananda' later.

v) Shri Vasudevananda Saraswati, Tembe :

Daivarata was ready to approach everybody and anybody provided that person approached by him was well versed in any branch which would help to develop the spirituality in him. One day Balavant Rao told Daivarata regarding the arrival of Vasudevananda to Banavasi. Then Daivarata was studying and practising *haṭhayoga* under Balavant Rao. Vasudevanand Saraswati was also a *vedic* scholar and knew *haṭhayoga* also.

The life-history of Vasudevananda is a part in the biography of Daivarata. The following account is noteworthy. Managanv was a village on the bank of a river in the Savantwadi province of today's Maharashtra state. There was a 'Karade'

brahmin family. A boy was born in that family on Friday in the month of *Shravana* in *Shalivahana shaka* 1776. Ganesha Bhat and Ramabai were parents of the boy and Hari Bhat was the grand-father. Vasudeva was the name given to the boy by his parents.

Ganesha Bhat was not much interested in the worldly life. He was indifferent and detached even towards family affairs. Hence Hari Bhat looked after the family. Since the father was of ascetic attitude, Vasudeva was brought up by the grand-father. Hari Bhat himself initiated the Devanagari alphabets to Vasudeva when the boy was of the age of four. Hari Bhat was a Sanskrit scholar. He taught Vasudeva gradually the alphabets, the numbers and occasionally some Sanskrit verses. The boy was intelligent in learning. The grand-father was very happy then and he started to introduce Sanskrit grammar and phonetics. The boy had a wonderful grasping power and he was reproducing in a short span of time whatever his grand-father taught him.

At the age of eight, Vasudeva underwent the *upanayana saṁskāra*. Now he was shining with inexpressible lustre. Hari Bhat intended to teach *veda* personally. Hence he started teaching *Rigveda*, immediately after the *upanayana* to Vasudeva. However he could not teach regularly as he had to look after the family also. Though the study was interrupted many a time, the boy was not worried and used to spend the leisures in spiritual activity like meditation.

Even this opportunity of learning *veda* from the grand-father was lost to Vasudeva as the grand-father died within two years after his *upanayana*. Not only Vasudeva's study was interrupted by the death of his grand-father but also family responsibility came over his shoulders. Vasudeva had to discharge all domestic duties under the guidance of his mother. Mother Ramabai was a woman of short

temper. Therefore Vasudeva became lonely.

Vasudeva helplessly awaited for some years till his younger brother took responsibilities of household. As soon as he was free, he came over to Sangli for the continuation of *vedic* and other studies. He joined the *Pathashala* and learnt whole of the *Rigveda saṁhitā*, *Brāhmaṇas* and allied literature in a record time. During his stay in Sangli, he studied Classical Sanskrit Literature under a famous scholar and he used to observe all the rites of a perfect celibate.

Vasudeva then returned to Managanv and married Annapurna at the age of twenty-one. She was a noble lady.

Vasudeva lost his father in a few days after the marriage. Subsequently, he installed an idol of Dattatreya in Managanv and was spending most of his time in worshipping the deity.

It is mentioned in the biography of Daivarata that one day Lord Dattatreya instructed Vasudeva in a dream to visit the pilgrimage-centres of Northern part. Accordingly, Vasudeva along with his wife went on a journey to visit holy places. He visited Narasobavadi, Kolhapur, Bhilvadi, Pandharpur and Gangakhed. Gangakhed is a village located on river Godavari. He liked that spot very much and stayed in that village for some time and performed various religious rites and deep meditation.

In that village, i.e. - Gangakhed, Vasudeva lost his wife. She became a victim to an unforeseen ailment. Abnormal high temperature and other diseases attacked at once and his efforts to save her were futile. When Vasudeva became certain that death was unavoidable he made arrangements to fulfil her last wish, i.e. of offering auspicious things as gifts. The matrimonial state of Vasudeva and Annapurna was ideal. But it did not last long.

Immediately after the funeral ceremony, Vasudeva renunciated worldly life and entered into the fold of *saṁnyāsa* according to the Hindu tradition. Now he became Vasudevananda Sarawati. He led the remaining life by doing penance, visiting holy places and preaching religion and philosophy.

Daivarata met Vasudevananda Saraswati first at Banavasi, then at Gokarn and again at Garudeshwara, a pilgrim-centre on the bank of Narmada river.

Vasudevananda Saraswati came to Gokarn after visiting Banavasi. He first came to Siddheshwara. There Daivarata and others wel-comed him and escorted him to Gokarn. He visited Mahabaleshwara temple and offered his salutations in the form of two hymns composed instantly. He stayed at Gokarn for thirteen days.

Arrangements were made on the upstairs of Ahalyabayi Chatra for Vasudevananda Saraswati's stay. Daivarata extended humble service during Vasudevananda's stay at Gokarn.

The life of Vasudevananda was very simple. He used to beg three houses per day, for his food. Whatever he got was sufficient to him and he was satisfied with only that much. Vasudevananda did not mind if food was not offered by the house-holders begged by him. A staff in hand, a water-bowl hanging on the shoulder and two pairs of clothes dyed with saffron colour were his only belongings.

Daivarata had the privilege of learning and practising *haṭhayoga* under Vasudevananda on the recommendation of Balavanta Rao Bhagawat. Vasudevananda taught Daivarata various advanced practices of *haṭhayoga*. Daivarata has mentioned all these practices clearly in his biography.[14]

Vasudevananda Saraswati preached many *yogic* secrets to Daivarata. In addition to these *yogic* secrets he taught many other things, viz., - the concept of *ribhu* in

the *veda* and the like.

Daivarata has declared in the biography that he viewed by his own naked eyes many miracles of Vasudevananda like floating on the water on a piece of cloth.[15] Vasudevananda was a writer of books in Sanskrit and in Marathi. He composed many devotional songs in Marathi and in Sanskrit. Daivarata recalls this in the biography.[16]

Such a profound preceptor was fortunately secured by Daivarata who utilised the opportunity to the fullest extent.

vi) Kavyakantha, Vasishtha Ganapati Muni

Ganesha had become Daivarata only because of the association with the great enlightened soul, Kavyakantha Vasishtha Ganapati Muni. Later on *guru* himself wrote the great Sanskrit commentary on *Chando-darśana*- a collection of about five hundred *mantras* revealed to his disciple Daivarata.

A brief life-sketch of Vasishtha Muni is as follows :

Bobbili is a small province in Vishakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh state and Kalavarayi is a small village in that province. That was the native place of Vasishtha Muni[17]. Narasimha Shastri and Narasamamba were his parents. The father was a famous Sanskrit scholar well-versed in *Āyurveda*, *Jyotiṣa* and *Tantra śāstra*.

In Andhra pradesh, Arasavalli is a pilgrim-place having the deity-'Sūrya'. Narasamamba was a devotee of that deity. Once she was staying in Arasavalli, chanting *Sūrya-Aṣṭākṣarī Mantra* which was preached to her by her husband. One day she saw a dream that was on *Ratha-saptamī*. In the dream she saw the deity which brought up a brilliant ball from *Sūrya-Maṇḍala* and placed it on her lap. Her

husband interpreted the dream as an indication of the grace of the deity. On the other hand, T.V.Kapali Shastri admits that Narasimha Shastri had worshipped Lord Ganapati at Benares and possessed the grace of the diety, while presenting a life-sketch of Vasishtha Muni in 'Umāsahasraṁ'.

Thus, a child was born to such pious parents on Sunday-*Aṣṭamī* of the dark half of *Kārtika* in the year of *Bahudhānya* (18.11.1878). Ganapati was the name given to the child by the parents. Parents were happy in the beginning, thinking that the child was a grace of the great God. But they became worried as the boy turned to be dumb, not only dumb but he was suffering from epilepsy also.

Six years passed in that condition and the father viz.,- Narasimha Shastri arranged *upanayana* and preached *Gāyatrī-mantra* to Ganapati along with *Śiva-pañcākṣarī*. The boy was meditating upon those *mantras* and miraculously after a few months his dumbness vanished. Since then the boy, as if all his barriers are removed, became very brilliant in learning scriptures as well as chanting *mantras*. He also became an orator. On whatever subject he spoke, he spoke rhythmically and melodiously and at the same time the speech was full of facts. Hence, the epithet, 'Kāvyakaṇṭha', conferred upon him, became meaningful.

Later on, the boy studied all the branches of Indian philosophy. Reading a book once was enough - such was the bright memory power - such was his sharp intelligence. At the age of ten he was calculating Hindu calendar and at the age of twelve he wrote '*Bhṛṅga Sandeśa*'- a *khaṇḍa kāvya* on the lines of Meghaduta of Kalidasa.

Subsequently at the age of sixteen he married Vishalakshi. Then at the age of eighteen he quit his native place and left for Benares. He had no more attraction and attachment towards worldly life. He stayed at Benares for some years. During

his stay at Benares he came to know that there was to be a meeting of Sanskrit scholars at Navadweepa in Bengal. He went there and took active part in 'Samasyā-pūraṇa' competition and he won all the participants. The assembly of *paṇḍits* honoured him and conferred the title-*Kāvyakaṇṭha* - upon him. That was at the beginning of the nineteenth century and he was hardly of the age of twenty--one. He travelled widely all over India and took part in such *paṇḍit*-meets and won many laurels. Later, he came back to his native place Kalavarai. The local *paṇḍits* challenged his scholarship. There also he won in the competition and the local scholars then accepted his scholarship.

Again Vasishtha Muni travelled northern part of India for four years. Then he turned to the south. While travelling in the south he came to know that *Krittikotsava* was famous in Arunacala and went there. Daivarata recalls the exact date in the biography. He reached Arunagiri on fourteenth day of bright half of *kārtika* month (18.11.1907). Some cowherds told him that one ascetic was doing penance in a nearby cave. Vasishtha Muni immediately went to the cave and asked six questions to that ascetic. But the ascetic was in deep meditation and hence, could not listen to the words of Vasishtha Muni. The result was that Vasishtha Muni came back that day with empty hands. But he did not stop his efforts. He continued his efforts for next couple of days. Still his efforts went in vain. On the fourth day he again approached the cave and again asked his questions and that day he was firm and determined that until and unless his questions were answered he would not quit the place. On that occasion that ascetic came out of his deep meditation. Vasishtha Muni asked - "I have studied many scriptures and have performed many kinds of austerities. Still I do not enjoy true peace. Then how can I get real bliss ?" Then that ascetic, who was not at all interested to speak to anybody, answered, looking

intently at the person in front of him, that the seeking of *Ātman* or the self is the true duty of a person and becoming one with that highest principle of this universe is the real cause for attaining the bliss. One should mingle and become one with that from which the concept 'I' sprung out. Later Vasishtha Muni became the disciple of that ascetic. That ascetic was none else than famous "Ramana Maharshi".

Afterwords Vasishtha Muni with the permission of Ramana Maharshi went to Kanci, Kanyakumari and some of the South Indian centres of studies. He became famous in *Aṣṭāvadhāna*. Again he came back to Arunacala and stayed for some time in the hermitage of Ramana Maharshi.

Then he turned to Karnatak region. He was eager to study *vedas* and *vedic* interpretation. He came to Gokarn, the traditional seat of *vedic* study and a renowned centre of pilgrimage. He entered through 'Vadabhandeshvara'and he stayed in the residence of Kota Venkatramana Upadhya, situated in the Nagabidi. No person in Gokarn knew him then.

Ganesha then was about 18 years old and was a married person. After his wanderings along with Ramadasa Swamy he returned to Gokarn and his father at that time had arranged his marriage with his maternal uncle's daughter Arundhati. In the meanwhile, he was attending Balavanta Rao's classes of *haṭhayoga*. In the meantime, Vasudevanda Saraswati visited Gokarn and Ganesha became his disciple and practised advanced *haṭhayoga*. When Vasishtha Muni visited Gokarn, Ganesha was the student of Sanskrit Vidyapith.

In those days Ganesha was curious about any ascetic who used to visit Gokarn as his quest for spiritual goal was not still realised by him. Therefore, he visited very often Vasishtha Muni in the house where Muni had put up, with the hope that this ascetic might guide him towards his goal. Muni was observing all these visits of

Ganesha. Situation was strange; Muni did not know Kannad as Muni's mother tongue was Telugu. Ganesha was not knowing Telugu. Inspite of that, Ganesha was moving in the vicinity of Vasishtha Muni very quietly viewing a strange ascetic only from a distance. One day Muni asked the young man as to why he was moving about there quite often. Ganesha hesitated to speak and doubted whether he was disturbing the ascetic by his visits. Then Muni showed favour upon Ganesha and asked him to visit whenever he liked to do so.

Vasishtha Muni was coming to Kotitirtha before day-break everyday. In the beginning people of Gokarn did not know the scholarship and genius of the ascetic and hence ridiculed him. Some naughty boys taunted him as black crow. But Muni tolerated all such humiliations.

Later on when his scholarship and asceticism became gradually revealed, the same tormentors felt ashamed and felt sorry for the ill-treatment shown towards him. They became his disciples one by one and surrendered to him. And every kind of arrangement was made for his comfortable stay. Thus, leading local *paṇḍits* also became his disciples.

Deep vedic study was the objective of his stay at Gokarn. He asked his disciples for a copy of the *Rigveda*. Nobody was ready to lend his book. Because, printed books were very rare in those days and people who had the books were very careful in keeping them protected. However, at last a *paṇḍit* called Ananta Upadhyaya was ready to lend his book but with one condition that Muni should utilise the book in his residence only. Vasishtha Muni readily accepted the condition and completed the reading within eight days by reading one *Aṣṭaka* a day. Again *paṇḍits* started commenting upon the capacities of Muni and sarcastically asked him to recall the *Rigvedic hymns*. He modestly agreed and started to chant the

hymns one by one. The *riks* spontaneously came out without any interruption. *Paṇḍits* surrendered to him. Such was Muni's genius. After this event he went to the Umamaheshvara temple which was located at the outskirts of Gokarn for doing penance for obtaining the knowledge of the *vedas* both in letter and in spirit. The temple was in an isolated place and whenever Muni was leaving for Gokarn his wife Vishalakshi had to remain there alone ; hence a companion for her was to be found. But no woman was ready to accompany for two reasons. Firstly, the place was far away from Gokarn and secondly, Muni's family was a stranger. Under such circumstances, Ganesha went there and stayed with Muni.

Vasishtha Muni was impressed by the ascetic qualities of the young man and named him 'Daivarata' as Muni came to know that Ganesha was born in *Viśvāmitra-gotra*. According to the tradition Daivarata is connected with *Viśvāmitra gotra*. Thus, Vasishtha Muni renamed the young man by the name Daivarata. In this way, Ganesha became Daivarata and later on he became renowned by that name only.

Daivarata served Muni and his spouse in every respect. He cooked for them according to their taste. He even did sweep with broom in the morning and cleansed with water and at dawn drew auspicious drawings on the floor. On the other hand Muni preached him the secrets of *upanishads* and meditation on the basis of *Rājayoga* ; ; like the daharopāsanā, mukhya-prāṇopāsanā, vaiśvānara *vidyā* etc. Muni used to take Daivarata to the sea-shore occupying a rock and taught him concepts of *Rājayoga* in the nights when moon-light was bright. Some time their debate extended till dawn. Daivarata recalls such incidents in his biography.[18]

Vasishtha Muni used to deliver discourses on the first day of every fortnight in Krishna temple located to the west of Kotitirtha. Many *paṇḍits* used to read some research-type papers. On one such occasion Daivarata presented a paper on 'The

Conduct of Brāhmaṇa'. It had an unorthodox tone. He had presented the subject with evidences and proofs culled from the scriptures. Muni himself was wonderstruck by the new interpretation. But *paṇḍits* in general did not accept the new interpretation and for this they blamed Muni and held him responsible for the unorthodox interpretation of Daivarata. However, Muni denied the responsibility and argued against Daivarata. Later, at the residence Muni appeased Daivarata for the refutation of the view of Daivarata. Because, the truth was always harsh, people do not accept the truth at once.

Vasishtha Muni stayed at Umamaheshvara temple for four months. Then he came to Gokarn and resided in a hermitage near sacrificial hall on the sea-shore. The hermitage belonged to Upadhyaya family. Many students of the Sanskrit Vidyapith used to come to the hermitage to learn literature, commentaries on the *vedas* and *śāstras*. Even scholars like Narayana Pandit, Venkataramana Pandit, Venkataramana Shastri Hosamane used to come for the sake of studying *Jyotiṣa Śāstra*. For the purpose of teaching *Jyotiṣa Śāstra* to them, he wrote his own text *Nirṇayasaṅgraha*. During this period Muni lost his father. Hence he went to his native place and completed the last rites of his father and came back to Gokarn. One *Jyotiṣṭoma*-sacrifice was performed by Uppund Upadhyaya. During that sacrifice Vasishtha Muni presided over the assembly of the scholars and delivered lectures on the *vedic* doctrines.

Afterwards Vasishtha Muni again changed his residence. He stayed in *Sarsumane* on Nagabidi along with Daivarata and wife Vishalakshi. During this stay he discussed and delivered lectures on *vedic* literature twice a day.

Moreover after some days he left for his native place. Daivarata followed him upto Bombay.

vii) **Ganapati Shastri**

Ganapati Shastri Hosamane was one of the renowned Sanskrit scholars in those days. He was the maternal uncle of Daivarata. He founded Sanskrit Vidyapith at Gokarn which became a full fledged Sanskrit College functioning even today.

Daivarata was a student of this Sanskrit Vidyapith when Vasishtha Muni came to Gokarn for the first time. Ganapati Shastri taught second canto of *Raghuvamsa* of Kalidasa. Daivarata sincerely recalls in the biography that he had learnt only that much through the help of a teacher.[19]

XI) Brief survey of wanderings of Daivarata with his preceptors:

Daivarata travelled almost every nook and corner of the country. Even he visited foreign countries like United States, Spain and Nepal in his second phase of life. He dedicated his whole life for the attainment of the highest reality. His wanderings along with his preceptors form a part of that effort. The different phases of wanderings of Daivarata with different preceptors at different times reveals how he was determined, firm and tolerant and even sometimes adventurous in achieving his particular goals.

Vighneshvara Bhadati, father of Daivarata had arranged latter's marriage when he was of the age of thirteen. He had been by then attracted by Ramadasa Swamy and his *Bhakti Marga*. Therefore he decided to escape from the marriage and went away from Gokarn. His destination was Ramadasa Swamy who had left Gokarn a few days back. Thus, in the first phase he wandered along with Ramadasa Swamy.

Daivarata met Ramadasa at Ujjain and wandered many holy places and pilgrim-centres like Prayaga, Benares, Ayodhya and observed many rites related to *bhakti*-cult and he met many ascetics like Chaunde Swamy at Benares.

After he returned to Gokarn Daivarata married Arundhati and he started visiting Balavant Rao for the purpose of having *haṭhayoga*-lessons. During those days Daivarata met Vasudevananda Saraswati in Gokarn. In the meanwhile Daivarata also met Vasishtha Muni in Gokarn and later he wandered along with Vasishtha Muni mostly in the southern part of India. While travelling, Daivarata met Ramana Maharshi and when he was meditating along with his preceptor Vasishtha Muni in Padaveta Daivarata became the seer of new *veda mantras*. In the midst of his wanderings Daivarata visited many pilgrim-centres like Matrigaya, Siddhapura and almost all holy places of South India.

X) The later life of Daivarata

i) Establishment of the "Ṛṣi-kula āśrama": When Daivarata returned to Gokarn from Skandāśrama, he stayed in Varadeshvara temple near Bhadati-house for a short period. He was thinking of his next venture. He then recalled his vow of establishing an *āśrama* while he was performing *pañcagavya-vrata* at Siddhapura. Immediately he approached his family priest-Dattatreya Dixit. Dixit suggested him two places on the bank of river Sharavati.

Daivarata went to those places with Gajanan Sabhahit who was familiar with the places. They visited those places, one near Jog-falls and another at Barang. But Daivarata was unable to acquire the land; he came back to Gokarn.

Moreover he was thinking of founding his *āśrama* in the surroundings of the Umamaheshwara temple where once Vasishtha Muni had stayed. That place was also not suited for his proposed *āśrama*. The Umamaheshwara temple was on a hilly place and there were many other problems like scarcity of water; because he wanted to adopt agriculture and animal husbandry also in his *āśrama*.

Ultimately, he established his *āśrama* at Ashoke on the surroundings of Mallikarjuna temple on the western sea-shore near Gokarn.

All the dreams he dreamt about his *āśrama* were transformed into reality in that establishment. The *āśrama* was exactly modeling *vedic gurukulas* in every respect.

Vedic study along with *vedic* interpretation, *haṭhayoga*-practices, farming and animal husbandry formed the salient features of that *āśrama.*

Daivarata had his own vision over the concept of education which was based on the concept of education of the *vedic rishis* . His concepts of education may be summed up as follows ;

According to him education is of two kinds, formal and practical. Formal education may be imparted at schools and practical education at home. The *āśrama* should provide both at one place and at the same time education should be associated with seven-fold disciplines. Only then education protects human beings. Seven-fold disciplines according to him are as follows:

1) *Āhāra* (palatal discipline)

2) *Vihāra* (bodily discipline)

3) *Ācāra* (religious discipline)

4) *Vicāra* (Mental discipline)

5) *Uccāra* (vocal discipline)

6) *Pracāra* (social discipline)

7) *Sākṣatkāra* (spiritual discipline)

Daivarata taught *vedas* and the *vedic* interpretation to his disciples. He performed sacrifices in the *āśrama* along with his students. He worked in the field with his pupils. He sang and danced along with his disciples when he was filled with

devotion. Whenever he went outside he used to bring rare species of plants to the *āśrama*. He himselfled sage-like life in the *āśrama* where secrifical fire was burning throughout day and night. But inspite of all his efforts, as time passed on, when new system of education emerged, and easy going methodology attracted younger generation, his *āśrama* suffered a set-back during his own life-time. Alas ! time is cruel and intolerant of good things.

The *āśrama* had been founded in the year of 1918-19/AD. And it suffered a set-back even before 1964 i.e. more than 10 years before his death.

2) Second marriage of Daivarata

By the time Daivarata returned to Gokarn from Skandāśrama, his wife Arundhati had expired. Therefore he was staying alone in his *āśrama*.

After some time, Parameshvara Bhat and his wife, of 'Jambe' family approached Daivarata along with their daughter Varamahalakshmi and requested Daivarata to marry their daughter. Daivarata accepted and marriage-ceremony took place in a very simple manner and the bride became Shraddhadevi after marriage. The couple lived a long life. They had many children. They had an ideal life in that *āśrama*.

XII Last Few Words

This essay on the life of Daivarata will be incomplete if we do not go through an article which was published in '*Bhavan's Journal*' in the year of nineteen hundred seventy. The article is not only a strong evidence for what has been said earlier in this essay but also gives a vivid picture of Daivarata's personality even at the age of eighty ; that was five years before his death. The whole article has been given as an appendix.

Daivarata is no more. He died on 13.08.1975. Shri R.R.Diwakar, who had contributed that article has given a call for thorough evaluation of *Chando-darśana* text and life of the author of *Chando-darśana* when Daivarata was still living. This research scholar has undertaken the task of evaluating that work with other works of Daivarata nearly one and a half decade after his death. Thus, the evaluation follows in the next few chapters.

FOOT NOTES

1) Bhadati family had agricultural land even before the birth of Daivarata -the fact is confirmed after an interview with Vedasrava Sharma-the grand-son of Daivarata.

2) In appendix I, the family tree of Daivarata is designed with the help of Vedasrava Sharama and Dr. G. S. Shastry- the grand-sons of Daivarata.

3) Ganesha was the name given by his parents and Daivarata is the name given by his preceptor Vasishtha Ganapati Muni- thus, Ganesha became Daivarata- Biography page-11.Kasturi-(Kannad digest) July-1964.

4) Biography of Daivarata - page -3

5) Ibid ., p -4

6) Ibid., p -8

7) The detail information regarding the family of Daivarata was given by Vedasrava Sharma and Dr. G.S. Shastry.

8) Preface to the commentary on Chando-darshana, page -xviii.

9) Biography of Daivarata page -11.

10) Ibid., p -68,70.

11) Kasturi (kannad digest) July-1964, page 76

12) Biography of Daivarata page -13.

13) Ibid., p-49

14) Ibid page -65 also, kasturi, July 1964, page -75 also, 'Bhavan's Journal' 14th June, 1970.

15) Biography of Daivarata page -63.

16) Datta Purana, Vedapada Stuti, Sanskrit version of 'Guru charitra' are some of the works of Vasudevananda Sarswati (Biography of Daivarata page -62).

17) 'Umasahsram'-edited by T.V. Kapali Shastry- page -2.

18) Biography of Daivarata -page -40,41.

19) Ibid., p-57.

APPENDIX I

The Family map of Daivarata Sarma

Varadesvara Bhadati

Shiva-Savitri

Vighneshvara (Father of Daivarata)

Subray-Parvati

Nagaveni	Saraswati	Parvati
(I wife)	(II wife)	(III wife)
1. Daivarata	No children	Umamaheshvara
2. Sitarama		Dattatreya
3. Lalita		Vighneshvara

Daivarata

Arundhati
(I wife)
No children

Varamahalaxmi (Shraddhadevi)
(II wife- 7 children)
1. Somashrava-Laxmi
i) Vedashrava
Somashrava-Savitri
i) Ashvinikumara ii) Rohini iii) Rajivi
2.Satyvrata - not married
3. Devashrava-Savitri
i) Shruti ii) Pratibhanu
4. Medhadevi-Mahabaleshvara
i) Gajanana ii) Gangadhara iii) Ashoka
iv) Vagishvari v) Girija vi) Savitri
5.Shachidevi-Ganapati
i) Agnikumara ii) Savitakumara iii) Ariyama
6. Prajnadevi-Venkatramana
i) Manjunata ii) Ravi iii) Purnima iv) Indu
7. Bharati-Laxminaramana
i) Soudamani ii) Nagaraja